

of the important effort to acknowledge the role played by the Hmong people in this war.

Ms. STABENOW. My colleague from Michigan is correct in stating that Hmong Special Guerrilla Units played an important role in assisting US efforts in the Vietnam conflict, often times at great sacrifice to themselves. From 1961 to 1975 it is estimated that about 25,000 young Hmong men and boys were fighting the Communist Lao and North Vietnamese. The Hmong Special Guerrilla Units were known as the United States' Secret Army, and their valiant efforts ensured the safety and survival of countless U.S. soldiers.

Mr. LEVIN. The Senator is correct. Hmong Special Guerrilla Units actively supported the United States, and risked great loss of life to save downed United States pilots and protect our troops. While the Special Guerrilla Units may have operated in secret, their efforts, courage and sacrifices have been kept secret for far too long. The word Hmong means "free people," and celebrations such as this commemoration will raise awareness of the loyalty, bravery and independence exhibited by the Hmong people.

Ms. STABENOW. It is important that the sacrifices made by the Hmong people are honored by all Americans. These rugged people, from the hills of Laos, paid a great cost because of their love of freedom and their support of the United States. It is estimated that over 40,000 Hmong died during the Vietnam War. Thousands more were forced to flee to refugee camps, and approximately 60,000 Hmongs immigrated to United States.

Mr. LEVIN. As the Senator from Michigan knows, thousands of Hmongs immigrated to the United States after the Vietnam War. The transition to life in the United States has not always been easy, but the Hmong community has grown and is prospering. There are nearly 200,000 Hmong in the United States, and many of them live in our home State of Michigan. It is important that those who fought in the Special Guerrilla Units are honored for their actions. These units, like all those who served the cause of freedom, must know that we appreciate the great sacrifices made by the Special Guerrilla Units.

Ms. STABENOW. I would concur with my good friend that events such as the 6th Annual Commemoration of U.S. Lao-Hmong Special Guerrilla Units Veterans Recognition Day play an important role in honoring these courageous veterans. This celebration will also educate future generations of Americans about the sacrifices made by this independent and freedom loving people. I know that my Senate colleagues will join me, and my colleague from the State of Michigan, in commending the Hmong Special Guerrilla Units for their bravery, sacrifice, and commitment to freedom.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, July 18, 2001, the Federal debt stood at \$5,712,502,926,348.50, five trillion, seven hundred twelve billion, five hundred two million, nine hundred twenty-six thousand, three hundred forty-eight dollars and fifty cents.

One year ago, July 18, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,680,376,000,000, five trillion, six hundred eighty billion, three hundred seventy-six million.

Five years ago, July 18, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,168,794,000,000, five trillion, one hundred sixty-eight billion, seven hundred ninety-four million.

Ten years ago, July 18, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,546,904,000,000, three trillion, five hundred forty-six billion, nine hundred four million.

Fifteen years ago, July 18, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$2,070,143,000,000, two trillion, seventy billion, one hundred forty-three million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$3.5 trillion, \$3,642,359,926,348.50, three trillion, six hundred forty-two billion, three hundred fifty-nine million, nine hundred twenty-six thousand, three hundred forty-eight dollars and fifty cents during the past 15 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DONNA CENTRELLA

• Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Donna Centrella, a very special woman whom I met 2 years ago during my campaign in New York. Donna died on Monday after a long, brave battle with ovarian cancer.

I first met Donna in September 1999, when I visited Massena Memorial Hospital in Massena, NY. Donna had been diagnosed with ovarian cancer in August, but did not have health insurance to cover her treatment. Miraculously, she found a doctor who would treat her without insurance and she was able to afford care through a variety of State programs.

Perhaps even more astounding was her doctor's statement that she was actually better off without managed care coverage because he could better treat her that way. Without HMO constraints, they were free to make the decisions about the best procedures to follow for her treatment and care—her doctor could keep her in the hospital as long as needed and he would not have to get preapproval for surgery.

I have retold Donna's unbelievable story many times since meeting this extraordinary woman. Hers is a story that underscores the profound need in this country for immediate reform of the way we provide health coverage to our citizens. We owe it to patients like Donna to sign patients protections into

law as soon as possible to ensure that we can provide the best medical treatment possible to everyone who needs it.

We have lost an ally, but I have faith that we will not lose the fight for greater patient protections. It saddens me greatly that Donna will not be here to see it happen. She was an amazing soul whose determination and strength we'll never forget.●

TRIBUTE TO LANCE CPL. SEAN M. HUGHES

• Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Lance Cpl. Sean Hughes of Milton, NH, who gave his life for our country on July 10, 2001, when a Marine Corps helicopter participating in a training exercise went down in Sneads Ferry, NC.

Sean was a graduate of Nute High School in Milton, NH. He joined the Marine Corps on July 14, 1999, following the military tradition of his father and grandfather who both served as members of the United States Air Force. An extremely talented and highly intelligent Crew Chief with Marine Helicopter Squadron 365, Sean will always be remembered as the little boy who enjoyed watching planes take off and land at the flight line with his father.

An artist, athlete, and committed Marine, friends each remember him as an exceptional person with a gentle heart. Those who knew him best described him as "irreplaceable," "a dear friend," and one that has "enriched their lives simply by having known him." His constant smile will be missed, as will his unwavering devotion to this country.

As a fellow veteran, I commend Sean for his service in the U.S. Marine Corps. Hundreds of Marines, friends, and family lost a devoted scholar, friend, brother, and son. The people of New Hampshire and the country lost an honorable soldier with a deeply held sense of patriotism. The determination and devotion he possessed as a Marine, and an individual, will not soon be forgotten.

I send my sincere sympathy and prayers to Sean's family and wish them Godspeed during this difficult time in their lives. It is truly an honor to have represented Lance Cpl. Hughes in the U.S. Senate.●

STRAND FAMILY FARM 100TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE

• Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to a North Dakota family that exemplifies the spirit of rural life and all that it contributes to our Nation. The Strand family, of Regan, ND, will this week celebrate 100 years on the family farm.

Andrew and Anna Strand arrived in North Dakota in 1901, brought by emigrant train to Wilton, ND. Then, with